



MARINE ENVIRONMENT
PROTECTION COMMITTEE
44th session
Agenda item 18

MEPC 44/18
17 December 1999
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WORK PROGRAMME OF THE COMMITTEE AND SUBSIDIARY BODIES

Management of workload of the Committee

Note by the MEPC Chairman

SUMMARY

<i>Executive summary:</i>	This document sets out the note by the MEPC Chairman on the management of workload of MEPC prepared as requested by MEPC 43
<i>Action to be taken:</i>	Paragraph 14
<i>Related documents:</i>	MEPC 43/18/3, MEPC 43/21

Background

1 The Committee will recall that MEPC 42 encountered difficulties in handling the number of working and drafting groups at the forty-second session, and that I sought the Committee's views on how this problem might be overcome. MEPC 42, having discussed the matter of management of working and drafting groups, agreed to discuss the matter further at MEPC 43.

2 As requested by the Committee at MEPC 42, I prepared a note for discussion on this issue for the Committee's consideration (MEPC 43/18/3). MEPC 43 considered the matter based on this document and agreed that:

- .1 the Committees' Guidelines on the organization of work should be followed and no more than three working groups should be convened during one session; and
- .2 the number of working groups should be reduced wherever possible.

3 MEPC 43 noted that it may be necessary to prioritize meetings of working groups in such a way that certain groups do not meet at every session. It was suggested that consideration be given to moving the OPRC Working Group under the auspices of one of the sub-committees.

4 MEPC 43 also noted a suggestion, supported by a number of delegations, to reconsider the structure and operation of the sub-committees as a means of completing the increasing number of environmental issues which IMO is being asked to address.

5 As a result of discussions, MEPC 43 agreed, among other decisions recorded in paragraph 18.22 of MEPC 43/21, that the Chairman should consider the method of work of the Committee to

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see whether other resources, such as the sub-committees and other international organizations, could be used more effectively and submit proposals to MEPC 44.

6 I advised the twentieth Extraordinary Session of Council and the twenty-first Assembly of the Committee's concern in relation to the Committee's work practices. I also advised that I would work closely with the Chairman of MSC in examining this matter during the 2000/2001 biennium.

Functions of the Committee

7 The Marine Environment Protection Committee is performing various functions under the IMO Convention but the following are the most significant:

- .1 to act as the **decision-making body** for:
 - adoption of amendments to MARPOL and various Codes;
 - adoption of pollution prevention measures as MEPC resolutions;
 - approval of the work of sub-committees;
 - approval of the work programmes of sub-committees; etc.
- .2 to carry out **technical work** in preparation of:
 - draft technical measures and regulations with various working/drafting groups; and
 - various technical recommendations;
- .3 to act as a focal point in IMO for the work of UNCED follow-up.

8 While acting as the decision-making body, MEPC is currently engaged, to a large extent, in dealing with technical work using *ad hoc* working/drafting groups.

9 The problem MEPC is facing is the matter of workload management and, in this context, the work method practised by MSC, which directs most of its technical work through the sub-committees, should be considered.

10 Under the Committees' Guidelines and current practice, various work programme items of MEPC are allocated to relevant sub-committees, including:

- | | | |
|----|--|------------|
| .1 | safety aspects of ballast water management | DE/SLF/STW |
| .2 | air pollution guidelines | DE |
| .3 | pollution prevention equipment | DE |
| .4 | MARPOL Annex I/Annex II matters | BLG |
| .5 | chemical hazard evaluation | BLG |
| .6 | mandatory reports under MARPOL | FSI |
| .7 | navigational measures for PSSAs | NAV |

11 However, most of the above are relatively minor specific technical issues. Under current arrangements it is not possible to send to a Sub-Committee the development of the more wide ranging environmental codes of practice, or new MARPOL annexes or conventions currently undertaken by the Committee's working groups and drafting groups. Examples are listed below. It is this aspect of the Committee's work which clearly requires examination with the view of putting in place more suitable arrangements under which the work performed by the Committee could be refocussed as a decision making body.

- .1 OPRC matters;
- .2 anti-fouling systems;
- .3 ballast water management;
- .4 reception facilities;
- .5 review of MARPOL Annex IV;
- .6 review of the NOx Technical Code;
- .7 future initiatives e.g. ship recycling; and
- .8 UNCED /CSD related matters

Solution

12 I do not intend at this stage to provide proposals for a possible solution, but I think the Committee should consider the following:

- .1 MEPC give consideration to determining the work which could be referred to sub-committees so that the Committee could concentrate its work as the decision-making body, while technical work could be carried out by relevant sub-committees; and
- .2 MEPC should make more use of expert bodies such as GESAMP, ISO, IACS and other expert organizations.

13 In the exercise of reviewing the work method of MEPC, Members are invited to also take into account that the organisational structure review of the IMO Secretariat will be conducted in 2000. An interim report of such organisational review will be made to Council in June 2000 and the final report by 31 December 2000 (A 21/21/Add.2).

Action requested of the Committee

14 The Member Governments are invited to take note of the above and submit their comments and proposals for suitable solutions. The Committee is invited to discuss this issue at the forthcoming forty-fourth session.